

**City Planning
Department**



Memo –

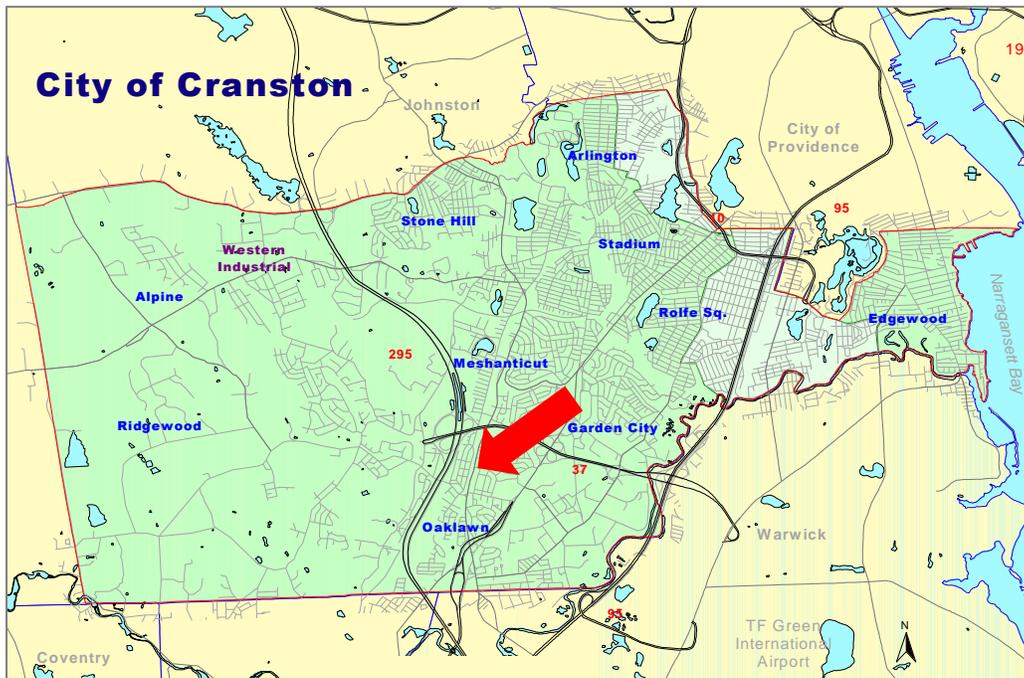
To: Cranston City Plan Commission
From: Alexander Berardo – Planning Technician / Administrative Officer
Date: July 8, 2022
Re: Staff Memo for **Ordinance #4-22-08** in Amendment of Chapter 17 of the Code of the City of Cranston, 2005, Entitled “Zoning” (Change of Zone – 870 Oaklawn Avenue, AP 15, Lot 358)

I. Ordinance Summaries

- **#4-22-08 Entitled “Zoning” (Change of Zone – 870 Oaklawn Avenue)**

The applicant and owner of AP 15, Lot 358, 870 Oaklawn, LLC, proposes to change the zoning district of AP 15, Lot 358 from C-2 (Neighborhood Commercial Business) to C-3 (General Business).

LOCATION MAP



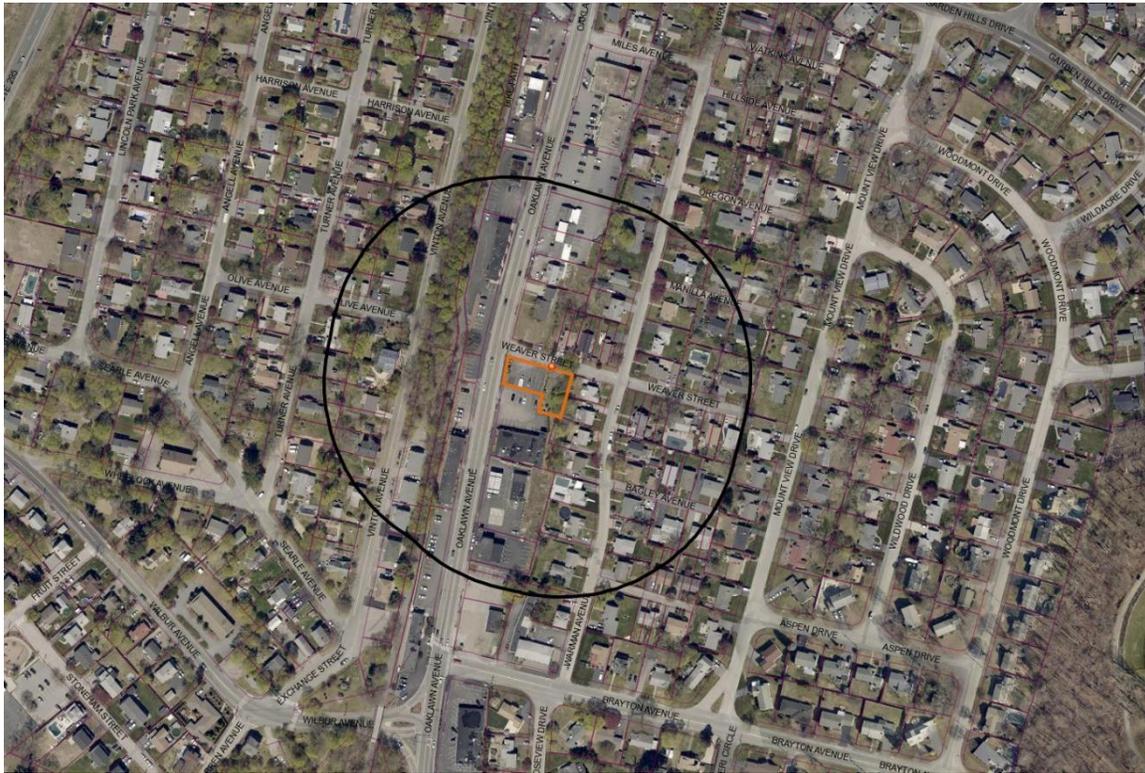
ZONING MAP



FUTURE LAND USE MAP



AERIAL IMAGE



AERIAL CLOSE UP



STREET VIEW



II. Planning Analysis

The applicant is proposing a zone change for the subject parcel from C-2 (Neighborhood Business) to C-3 (General Business) with no conditions. **There are no development plans associated with the zone change proposal at this time.**

As shown on the Zoning map on p. 2 of this memo, the subject parcel is bordered by C-3 zoned lots to the north and the south on the same side of Oaklawn Avenue. Staff would note that this stretch of Oaklawn Avenue has seen recent continuations of an ongoing trend toward rezoning to a consistent, C-3 zone: A.P. 15, Lots 361 and 368 (840 and 846 Oaklawn Avenue) went before the City Council in November 2021 for a zone change from A-6 to C-3. Staff asserts that **this proposal would result in a contiguous, nine-parcel-long band of C-3 zoned commercial lots, thereby promoting a more uniform land use and development pattern on this side of Oaklawn Avenue.**

To assess whether a zone change is consistent with the Comprehensive Plan, staff considers the Future Land Use Map as well as specific Goals and Policies. The following Goals, Policies, and statements from the Comprehensive Plan provide additional rationale for the consideration of changing the subject parcel from C-2 to C-3:

- **LUP-2.6** - *Implement policies that protect residential neighborhoods from commercial encroachment through regulation, appropriate buffers, development design standards, traffic planning, and site plan review. [Page 8]*

Discussion: **This rezone would not constitute a case of commercial encroachment into a residential area.** The rezone would instead reinforce the distinction between the

C-3 zoned commercial strip along Oaklawn Avenue and the A-6 zoned residential neighborhood directly to the east. As the C-3 zone does not allow single-family residential uses (whereas the C-2 zone does), the rezone will serve to solidify this separation going forward and thereby avoid future conflicts. Therefore, staff believes the proposal is consistent with this policy.

- **LUG-9** - *Protect and stabilize existing residential neighborhoods [Page 9]*

Discussion: Similar to the reasons stated above for LUP-2.6, staff believes the proposal is consistent with this goal. Staff considers the subject parcel on Oaklawn Avenue is best suited for a commercial use, consistent with the other parcels along Oaklawn to the north and south. **The rezoning will create a uniform line of separation between commercial and residential uses.**

- **HP-3.2** - *Maintain the stability of established neighborhoods in connection with continued economic development and revitalization: in particular, protect neighborhoods abutting the City's major commercial corridors from adverse impacts arising from incompatible uses. [Page 10]*

Discussion: Staff believes the proposal is consistent with this policy because the subject rezoning creates an appropriate balance between housing and economic development for this area. **The proposal would also ensure stability in the zoning of this neighborhood by creating a uniform commercial buffer along Oaklawn Avenue, which ensures that residential uses will not be surrounded by, or mixed in with, commercial uses directly on a busy commercial corridor.**

- **EDG-1A** - *Preserve and increase employment opportunities for Cranston residents. [Page 11]*
- **EDG-2** - *Attract capital into the Cranston area and expand the City's economic base. [Page 12]*
- **EDP-5.1** - *Adjust zoning map boundaries of commercial districts along major arterials, and refine use regulations applicable to such districts, to provide for adequate commercial services while minimizing impacts on adjoining residential neighborhoods. [Page 12]*

Discussion: As Oaklawn Avenue is a major arterial road, the subject parcel meets the criteria for this policy. Staff believes the proposed zone change provides adequate commercial services while also removing potential impacts to or conflict with the residential neighborhood to the east.

III. Findings per City Code §17.120.030

(A): Consistency with the Cranston Comprehensive Plan 2010:

There are a significant number of Comprehensive Plan goals and policies that are in support of a positive consideration of Ordinance 4-22-08, including but not limited to LUP 2.6, LUG-9, HP-3.2, and EDG-1A, 2, & 5.1. Additionally, the proposed ordinances would

bring greater uniformity to the Zoning Map by rezoning this C-2 parcel to become more consistent with the surrounding, C-3 zoned commercial properties on the eastern side of Oaklawn Avenue. For these reasons, **Ordinance #4-22-08 is consistent with the City's Comprehensive Plan.**

(B). Recognition and Consideration of the Purposes of Zoning in City Code §17.04.010:

The general purposes of zoning as prescribed by city Code Section §17.04.010 have been recognized and considered in review of the proposed ordinance, and the ordinance has been found to be consistent with the general purposes of zoning.

IV. Recommendations

1) Ordinance 04-22-08 Ordinance in amendment of Chapter 17 of the Code of the City of Cranston, 2005, entitled "Zoning" (Change of Zone – 870 Oaklawn Avenue)

Due to the finding that the rezone from C-2 to C-3 is consistent with the Comprehensive Plan goals and policies, would bring greater conformity to the zoning of the area, and is consistent with the purposes of zoning as detailed in City Code Section §17.04.010, staff recommends that the Plan Commission send a **positive recommendation** on Ordinance #4-22-08 to the City Council.